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THE

CATECHISM

of the

WALDENSES & ALBIGENSES,

the

FIRST REFORMERS

FROM POPERY,

ABOUT THE YEAR 1150,

ABOVE THREE HUNDRED YEARS BEFORE LUTHER.

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To the Reader.

I am happy in having it in my power to bring out of oblivion, the ensuing short compendium of sacred and experimental divinity, maintained by those first reformers, confessors and martyrs, from the Romish Antichrist; *and it is no small comfort to find how exactly they agree with the great truths which I and my brethren are endeavouring to introduce amongst mankind. I admire their clearness, considering them the first fruits of the reformation.—I have long been contemplating the history of these valiant witnesses, which has now been published a few months.*

T. TAYLOR.

Manchester, Dec. 5,
1795.

A CATECHISM.

Question. *What art thou?*

Answer. A creature of God, reasonable and mortal.

Q. *Why hath God created thee?*

A. To the end I should know and serve him, and that I may be saved by his grace.

Q. *In what doth thy salvation consist?*

A. In three essential virtues, which do necessarily belong to salvation.

Q. *Which be they?* *A.* Faith, Hope, & Charity.

Q. *How dost thou prove it?*

A. The Apostle saith, in the first epistle to the *Corinthians*, Chap. xiii. 13. These three things remain, Faith, Hope, and Charity.

Q. *What is Faith?*

A. *Heb.* xi. 1. It is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.

Q. *How many kinds of Faith are there?*

A. There

A. There are two sorts of Faith, that is, a lively and a dead Faith.

Q. *What is a lively Faith?*

A. That which worketh by Love.

Q. *What is a dead Faith?*

A. According to St. *James*, That Faith which is without Works, is dead. Again, Faith is nothing without Works: or, a dead Faith is to believe there is a God, and to believe those things concerning God, and not to believe in God.

Q. *What is thy Faith?*

A. The true Catholick and Apostolick Faith.

Q. *What is that?*

A. It it that which in the Apostles Symbol is divided into twelve Articles.

Q. *What is that Symbol?*

A. I believe in God, the Father Almighty, &c.

Q. *By what means canst thou know that thou believest in God?*

A. By this: because I know that I have given myself to the observation of the Commandments of God.

Q. *How many Commandments of God are there?*

A. Ten, as it appeareth in *Exodus* & *Deuteronomy*.

Q. *Which are they?*

A. Hearken, O Israel, I am the Lord thy God. Thou shalt have no other Gods but me. Thou shalt not make to thyself any graven Image, nor the likeness of any thing that is in Heaven, &c.

Q. *Upon what do all these Commandments depend?*

A. Upon the two great Commandments, that is

is to say, Thou shalt love God with all thine heart, and thy Neighbour as thyself.

Q. *What is the foundation of these Commandments, without which no man can fulfil them?*

A. Our Lord Jesus Christ, of whom the Apostle saith, in the first to the *Corinthians*, None can lay any other foundation but that which is laid, even Jesus Christ.

Q. *By what means may a man attain to this foundation?*

A. By Faith: so saith St. *Peter*, 1 Epistle, ii. 6. Behold, I lay in *Sion* a chief corner stone, elect, precious, and he that believeth in him, shall not be confounded. And our Saviour saith, He that believeth in me shall have eternal life.

Q. *How dost thou know that thou believest?*

A. Because I know him to be true God, and true man, who was born, and suffered, &c. for my redemption, and justification; and that I love him, and desire to fulfil his Commandments.

Q. *By what means may a man attain to these essential virtues, viz. Faith, Hope, and Charity?*

A. By the gifts of the Holy Ghost.

Q. *Dost thou believe in the Holy Ghost?*

A. I do believe: for the Holy Ghost proceedeth from the Father and the Son, and is a person of the Trinity, and, according to the Divinity, is equal with the Father and the Son.

Q. *Dost thou believe God the Father, God the Son, God the Holy Ghost, to be three persons: then are there not three Gods?* *A.* No, there are not three Gods.

Q. *But yet thou hast named three?*

A. That was by reason of the difference of the Persons, not of the Essence of the Divinity: for though there be three Persons, yet there is but one Essence.

Q. *After what manner dost thou adore, and serve that God, in whom thou believest?*

A. I adore him by an exterior and interior adoration: exterior, by the bowing of the knees, the lifting up of the hands, the inclination of the body, with hymns and spiritual songs, fasting, invocation: but inwardly by a holy affection, a will ready to do what he pleaseth, and I serve him by Faith, Hope, and Charity, in his Commandments.

Q. *Dost thou adore and serve any other thing as God?*

A. No.

Q. Wherefore?

A. Because of his Commandment, whereby he strictly commanded, saying, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him *only* shalt thou serve. As also, I will not give my glory to another. Again, As I live saith the Lord, every knee shall bow unto me. And Christ Jesus saith, They shall be true worshippers, who worship the Father in spirit and truth: And the Angel would not be adored by St. *John*, nor St. *Peter* by *Cornelius*.

Q. *After what manner dost thou pray?*

A. I pray according to that Prayer that was taught us by the Son of God, OUR FATHER WHICH ART IN HEAVEN, &c.

Q. *Which*

Q. *Which is the other substantial virtue necessary to salvation?* A. It is Charity.

Q. *What is Charity?*

A. It is a gift of the Holy Ghost whereby the soul is reformed in will, illuminated by Faith, whereby I believe all that I ought to believe, and hope whatsoever I ought to hope.

Q. *Dost thou believe in the holy Church?*

A. No, for that is a creature: But I believe there is a Church.

Q. *What is that thou believest touching the holy Church?*

A. The Church considered, according to the verity of the Ministry, are the Ministers of Christ, with the people subject unto them, or committed to their charge, using their Ministry by Faith, Hope, and Charity.

Q. *By what marks dost thou know the Church of Christ?*

A. By fit and convenient Ministers, and by the people who participate in the truth of that ministry.

Q. *How dost thou know the Ministers?*

A. By the true apprehension of faith, by sound doctrine, by the life of good example, the preaching of the Gospel, and the due administration of the Sacraments.

Q. *By what marks dost thou know the false Ministers?*

A. By their fruits, by their blindness, by their wicked works, by their perverse doctrine, and by their

their unfit disorderly administration of the Sacraments.

Q. *How may we know their blindness?*

A. When they, not knowing that truth which belongeth of necessity to salvation, observe human inventions, as the Commandments of God; of whom that is verified which the Prophet *Isaiah* speaketh, and that hath been alledged by our Saviour Christ Jesus, *Mat.* xv. *This people honour me with their lips, but their heart is far from me; but in vain they serve me, teaching the doctrine and commandments of men.*

Q. *By what means or marks are wicked works made known?*

A. By those manifest sins of which the Apostle speaks, *Rom.* i. saying, that they that do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God.

Q. *By what marks is false doctrine known?*

A. When men teach against Faith and Hope, as divers kinds of idolatries, worshipping the reasonable, sensible, visible, or invisible creatures; for it is the Father only, with his Son and the Holy Ghost, that must be served, and no creature.

Q. *By what marks is the disorderly administration of the Sacraments known?*

A. When the Priests know not the intention of Christ in the Sacraments, and teach that all grace and truth is included in them; and lead men to the participation of the Sacraments, without Faith, Hope, or Charity. It is the will of

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the Lord, that all his should take heed of false Prophets, saying, *Beware of false Prophets.* And again, *Beware of the Pharisees,* that is to say, of their leaven and false doctrine. And again, *Believe them not, follow not after them.* And the Lord commandeth us to withdraw ourselves from among such people, Numbers, xvi. 26. *Depart from the tents of these wicked men, and touch nothing of theirs, lest you be consumed in all their sins.* And the Apostle, 2 Cor. vi. 14. *Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers; for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness? What concord hath Christ with Belial? or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel?* And, *What agreement hath the Temple of God with idols? Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separated, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing, and I will receive you.* Again, in the 2 Thess. iii. 12. *We command and exhort you, by our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye withdraw yourselves from every brother that walketh disorderly.* And in the eighteenth of the Rev. 4. *Come out of her my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues.*

Q. *By what marks may we know those that are not in the truth of the Church?*

A. By their sins and erroneous faith; for we are to fly from such people, lest we be contaminated with their sins.

Q. *By*

Q. *By what things oughtest thou to communicate with the holy Church?*

A. I must communicate with the Church, by Faith, Hope, and Charity; and by the observation of the Commandments, and by final perseverance in that which is good.

Q. *How many ministerial things are there?*

A. Two; the Word, and the Sacrament.

Q. *How many Sacraments are there?*

A. Two; that is to say, Baptism, and the Supper of the Lord.

Q. *What is the third virtue necessary to salvation?*

A. Hope.

Q. *What is Hope?*

A. It is a certain pleasing expectation of the grace and glory to come.

Q. *By what means do we hope for grace?*

A. By the Mediator, Jesus Christ, of whom St. *John* speaketh, Chap. i. 17. *Grace came by Jesus Christ.* And again, *We beheld his glory full of grace and truth, and we have all received of his fullness.*

Q. *What is Grace?*

A. It is Redemption, Remission of sins, Justification, Adoption, Sanctification.

Q. *By what means do we hope for this Grace in Christ?*

A. By true Repentance, and a lively Faith, Jesus Christ saying, *Repent, and believe the Gospel.*

Q. *From whence doth Hope proceed?*

A. From

A. From the gift of God, and his promises: and therefore saith the Apostle, *He is able to accomplish whatsoever he promiseth:* for he hath promised himself, that at what time soever a sinner shall know himself, and repent of his sins, and hope, that he will have mercy, pardon, and justify, &c.

Q. *What are the things that divert a man from his Hope?*

A. A dead faith, the seducing of Antichrist to any other than Christ; that is to say, to Saints, and the power of that Antichrist in his authority, words, benedictions, sacraments, reliques of the dead. The teaching men to have hope, by those means that directly oppose themselves against the Truth, and against the Commandments of God, as idolatry after divers manners, and Simoniacal wickednesses, &c. Abandoning the fountain of living water given by grace, to run after broken cisterns; adoring, honouring, and serving the creature, by prayers, and fastings, and sacrifices, donations, offerings, pilgrimages, invocations, &c. trusting thereby to attain grace, which none can give but God alone in Jesus Christ. So that in vain they travel, and lose their labour and their life; and doubtless not only this present life, but that which is to come; for which cause it is said, that the hope of the hypocrite shall perish.

Q. *And what say you of the blessed Virgin* Mary? *For she is full of grace, as the Angel testifieth, Hail* Mary *full of grace, &c.*

A. The blessed Virgin hath been, and is full

of

of grace in her self, but not to communicate unto others: for her Son only is full of grace to bestow on others, as it is said of him, *And we all receive of his fulness grace for grace.*

Q. *Dost thou not believe the communion of Saints?*

A. I believe there are two things in the which the faithful do communicate, the one is substantial, the other ministerial: they communicate in the substantial by the Holy Ghost, in God by the merit of Jesus Christ. But they communicate in the ministerial, or ecclesiastical, by the Ministry duly exercised, that is to say, by the Word, by the Sacraments, and by Prayer. I believe the one and the other of these two Communions of Saints: the first only in God by the Spirit, the other in the Church by Christ.

Q. *In what doth life eternal consist?*

A. In a lively working Faith, and perseverance therein. Our Saviour saith, John xvii. iii. *This is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent:* and, *He that endureth to the end shall be saved.* Amen.

FINIS.

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